



Citation for published version:

Curdtt-Christiansen, XL 2018, 'Engaging language policy from Macro to Micro level: migration and language in Europe', *Language and Education*, vol. 32, no. 5, pp. 391-393. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09500782.2018.1489830>

DOI:

[10.1080/09500782.2018.1489830](https://doi.org/10.1080/09500782.2018.1489830)

Publication date:

2018

Document Version

Peer reviewed version

[Link to publication](#)

This is an accepted manuscript of an article published by Taylor and Francis in *Language and Education* on 25th October 2018, available online, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09500782.2018.1489830>

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Special Issue of *Language & Education*

Title: Engaging Language Policy from Macro to Micro Level: Migration and Language in Europe

The upsurge of right-wing populism across Europe and in the United States has caused much sociopolitical instability in recent years. Public discourse against migration and its influence on the public perception of immigration and migrants (Fitzsimmons-Doolan, 2009; Wodak and Krzyżanowski 2017) have created an urgent need for researchers and practitioners to examine language and educational policies in relation to migration across different geopolitical contexts.

This special issue is situated against the backdrop of the current migration crisis in many EU countries. It responds to various recent challenges and, in particular, to a variety of language and curriculum policies for migrant students that have been implemented in different educational contexts across Europe. The theme and the title for this special issue of *Language and Education* stem from a thematic colloquium, presented at the AILA Congress in Rio, Brazil in July 2017. It brings together four papers that respond to the challenges of language policy in schools caused by the intensified transnational movement or displacement of people, planned and forced migration, and socio-political changes that have taken place in four European countries: England, Germany, Finland and Luxembourg.

Focusing on language policy issues in school context, the papers in this issue critically examine the role teachers play for migrant and multilingual children's access to education, their integration into the dominant/institutional language, and the development of their culture and home language. To illustrate the powerful role of schools in socialization, the papers investigate one of the most important aspects of language policy: language policy engagement.

Engagement is a process that involves agents from different levels to appropriate, interpret, negotiate, and (re)construct a language policy (Menken and Garcia 2010; Johnson 2013; Johnson and Johnson 2015). As a starting point, it recognizes the ‘unplanned language plans’ (Egginton 2001) from various forces on different local levels. These forces may or may not be congruent with the language ideologies ascribed by policy makers, resulting from different language practices, language attitudes, and perceived language values in linguistic markets and political contexts.

Policy engagement takes into consideration the role of various policy actors/agents (such as teachers and students) in the process of policy enactment (Hornberger and Johnson 2011; Johnson 2013). It places the focus on policy actors as they interact with each other to make sense of the linguistic environment, sociopolitical settings and educational contexts in which the language policy is developed and implemented. The papers in this issue explore how ideological beliefs are at work when policy actors engage in policy interpretation and policy making in different geopolitical contexts in Europe. By looking at societal and institutional discourses’ influence on teachers’ and students’ perceptions of migration and language, the papers provide an insight into how macro language policies are interpreted and appropriated, what micro language policies are created, and how such language policies are manifested in school and classroom practices. In this issue we adopt Kaplan and Baldauf’s (1997) use of macro and micro level. Macro level refers to national level or governmental level organizations, whereas micro level refers to small organizations, such as a school or a classroom.

All papers explore one of the most important aspects of language policy – policy engagement. Coherently, they all focus on how teachers as agents and policy actors make sense of macro level policies and recontextualise these policies for their own teaching context. Drawing on research and inquiry from different educational contexts in the above

mentioned four countries and involving ethnic/national and dominant/non-dominant languages, the special issue advances our understanding of the factors and contexts that influence micro/local policies in education of migrant and multilingual children. The articles contribute to studies of migration, language policy and multilingual pedagogy by providing timely and informed evidence that has implications for migrant children's social and educational, wellbeing, and social cohesion of the host society.

The Special Issue opens with a study conducted by Panagiotopoulou and Rosen in which they examine policy enactment in a so-called preparatory class for young refugees in Germany. By observing classroom practices, they studied how teachers internalize the official language policy to thwart refugee students' multilingual practices in the classroom. The next article, by Flynn and Curdt-Christiansen, reports on a study of policy makers' intentions and the practical realities in the UK. They examined how policies for EAL have changed in its intentions by comparing the curriculum policy from the pre-2010 (1999 – 2009) period with that from the post-2010 (2011 – 2016) period. Exploring ideologies concerning migration under different ruling parties, they also investigated through a survey how teachers make sense of past and current policies in relation to EAL practice. The following contribution by Tarnanen and Palviainen focuses on Finland and Finnish teachers who as policy agents reflected on two curriculum policies, FNBE 2004 and FNBE 2014. They paid particular attention to the teachers' beliefs and practices by carrying out a meta ethnography of four qualitative studies to understand how teachers, consciously or subconsciously, make policy through their talk and classroom interactions. The subsequent contribution is by Kirsch who situated her study in multilingual Luxembourg. Her study focuses on the crucial roles that teachers play in the process of policy implementation. Employing a case study approach, she examined how a teacher engaged with policy and, based on her beliefs, experience and practice, used a multilingual-oriented pedagogical

approach, capitalizing on children's diverse language repertoires. The Special Issue closes with a commentary by David C. Johnson who highlights the major contribution of the papers and points out future directions of research in the field.

Taken together, the Special Issue illustrates that language policy engagement is a critical aspect of policy implementation which has significant implications not only for migrant children's access to education and for their wellbeing but also for social equality in our society. It is evidenced from the rich data in this thematic issue that language policy engagement can open up or close down linguistic and educational spaces for recognizing the language rights of migrant children, enabling equal access to education, and narrowing the gap in educational achievement.

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